



# punch

OR

THE LONDON CHARIVARI



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## Charivaria

WE understand that the sudden illness of another Nazi general on the Eastern Front, which was to have taken place this week, has been postponed.

LORD BEAVERBROOK recently stated that this country was turning out 600 guns a week. What annoys the Nazis is that we have 2 oz. of butter too.

A portion of the Italian Fleet was said to be out in the Mediterranean recently. That's all there is now, of course.

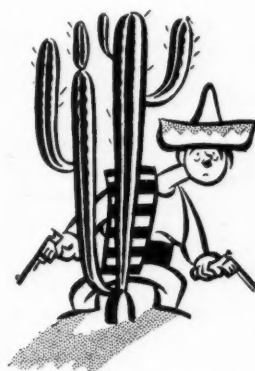
Portuguese troops recently sailed to garrison the Portuguese colony of Timor in the Pacific. We take it that on this particular occasion Mr. DE VALERA was informed.



"I am the first musketeer of the Reich," said HITLER recently. The other two are GOERING.

A Berlin citizen was arrested in the street by members of the Gestapo. It was found that he was wearing underwear and had foolishly forgotten to shiver.

It is reported that a man who in 1940 was employed as one of HITLER's doubles has escaped from Germany and is now in Mexico. Apparently he had an intuition too.



A correspondent says he has a very old-fashioned radio set. When he switched it on at six o'clock the other evening an anonymous announcer read the weather forecast and followed it with the First News.

QUISLING has been appointed Prime Minister of Norway. This is the result of an overwhelming vote of no-confidence passed by Norway.

A correspondent says he still has all his clothing coupons. Apparently he took the precaution of storing them away carefully with plenty of moth-balls.

An American journalist declares that there isn't nearly enough sting in our newspaper articles. As though we don't get more than our share of that in the news columns.

### One St. Patrick Missed

"Every country has its national motto, Ireland has 'Erring Cobra.'"  
Schoolboy's Essay on "Slogans."

A Berlin broadcaster says that America must realize that the Axis is at war in the Atlantic as well as in the Pacific. U.S. troops who landed in Northern Ireland had no idea during the journey that they were trespassing.



### Condescension Corner

"'Hamlet' will be played to-day and to-morrow, with a matinee performance to-morrow; 'Richard III.' will be presented on Thursday afternoon and evening, and on Friday and Saturday will be the entertaining and cleverly written 'The Merchant of Venice,' with a matinee on Saturday."—*Sussex Paper*.

The attendance at the London Zoo last year was 512,966. Not one specimen was retained for exhibition in the permanent collection.

## Never Mind About Arms

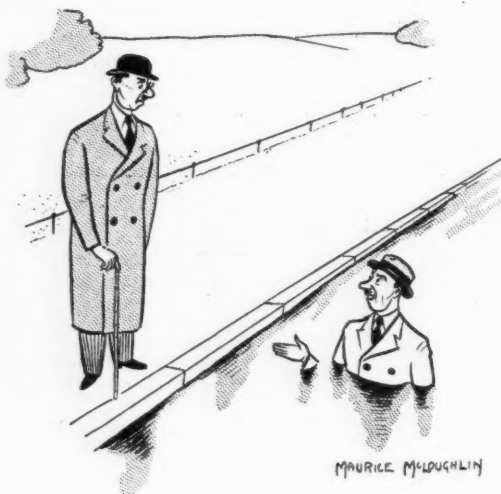
**F**ROM "official pronouncements" made last week I learned that some members of the Home Guard are to be equipped with pikes, and that civilians are compelled by law to resist the enemy. I welcome both pronouncements, but more particularly the second. Too long have civilians waited and wondered what they ought to do when invaders land. Too long have they been planning how to treat the Germans when the war was over instead of deciding how to treat them while the war was still going on. The latest declaration offers them a wide choice of weapons, and they ought to be busy refurbishing their armouries. The Government (it is said) will issue instructions. I hope they will be simple. I doubt it. I therefore propose to issue a few pronouncements of my own.

**Tin-tacks in Cake.** Remember that invaders are very likely to be hungry. It is far better to give them food than to deny it to them. Have a simple cake (or better still a plain carrot pie) standing ready in the larder. Make it according to the excellent recipes supplied by the Ministry of Food, but substitute half a pint of tin-tacks for the usual vitamins, and mix plaster of Paris with the paste or flour. Remember also that Germans are:

- (1) Very stupid.
- (2) Very well acquainted with the English language.

Write clearly therefore on a piece of paper "For little Dot's birthday," and place it near the cake or pie. Keep little Dot out of the larder.

**Molten Lead.** Always have plenty of lead ready melted in a convenient receptacle, and pour it carefully on the heads of invaders seeking to enter your house. Throw first a bunch of flowers, thus inducing the enemy to look upwards and disarming his hostility. Then drop the lead quickly before it has time to cool. Boiling oil may be used in the same manner, but not petrol, methylated spirits or paraffin.



"Well, look at it this way, I'm Java . . ."

**Tent-nails.** This device was used successfully to immobilize Sisera by Jael the wife of Heber the Kenite (not to be confused with the hymnologist), and she was subsequently called "blessed amongst women" by the prophetess Deborah, a prominent spokeswoman of the Israelites. Bring forth butter on a lordly dish, and when the invader has had enough of it and sinks into a torpor, strike the nail sharply through his head with an ordinary coal-hammer. Whale-oil may be substituted for butter, and it is not necessary to employ the best dinner-service, except for officers of field rank.

**Slings.** These are difficult weapons and need more practice than many householders will have time for. On the other hand they can be made of ordinary handkerchiefs and need no ammunition but stones, door-handles, paper-weights and the like. All the Benjamites could sling left-handed at an hair's breadth, but it is not stated whether they hit it. They were also used by outrageous fortune. (*Hamlet*, III. i. 56.)

**Blow-pipes and Poisoned Darts.** These are being used with great effect against the Japanese by the Dyaks in Borneo, according to the B.B.C. First make a blow-pipe, then fashion a few darts, and go to the nearest chemist for some poison to put upon them.

**Armoured Elephants.** Owing to the break-up of many famous circuses and the intensity of the scrap-iron campaign very few of these are now available.

**Eels.** See *The History of Mr. Polly*, by H. G. Wells. The eels chosen should be large, dead, grasped very firmly and wielded with energy, courage and precision.

**Cross-bows.** See Coleridge.

**Other Booby Traps.** Any number of these may be devised by the ingenious citizen. A petrol-lighter in which the flint has been worn down and the ignition is faulty through lack of petrol may be offered with a cigarette to the invader. While he is occupied in vain attempts to put the cumbersome machinery in motion he can be struck on the head with a rolling pin, stabbed in the back with a pair of scissors, or sawn rapidly in two with a hand-saw. Red ink may be offered instead of red wine, as is usual in most restaurants. If you have a cellar, take away the last three stairs and say that there is a dump of ammunition at the bottom. When you hear a noise, lock the door leading to the stairs and ring up Scotland Yard. Puff-adders may be kept in *escritoires*, and scorpions amongst underwear. Remember that nearly all Germans are short of underwear. All lifts should be fitted with collapsible floors, actuated electrically by the head-porter in the basement. Fountains may be filled with dynamite. A suggestion that other members of the family are hiding in the garden air-raid shelter is almost certain to expose a German investigator to death by drowning. Air-wardens and fire-watchers will do well to keep at least half a dozen pails filled with vitriol, and set aside one stirrup-pump to use with them. Feign madness if necessary. Shout "Heil Hitler!" and wave a German flag from your window. Then go into the kitchen and hide behind the door with a red-hot poker. Put leeches in the water-jug. Make a margarine-slide in the hall. The flavour of prussic acid can easily be disguised in stewed prunes. Cover the chairs with liquid glue. Let all the children help. See to it, in fact, that any German who comes into your house will heartily wish that he had fallen into the merciful hands of the Armed Forces of the Crown.

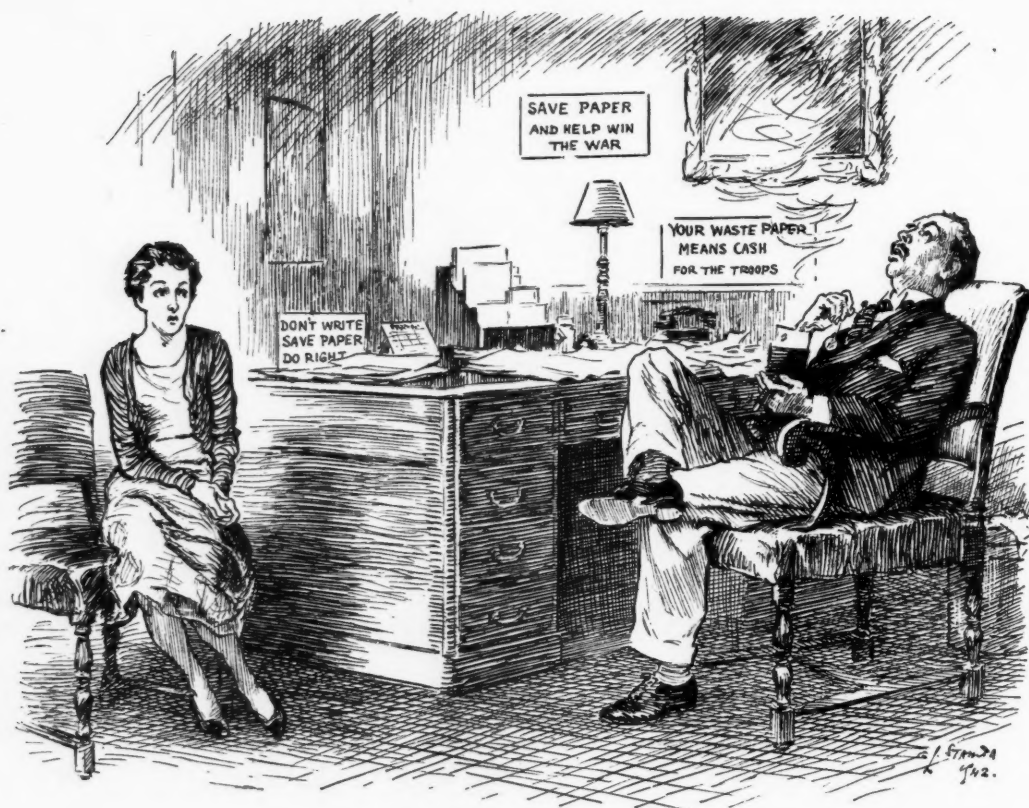
(Further hints on the same subject will be found on pages 118 and 119.)

EVOE.



**"FREEDOM" FOR NORWAY**

"Here is your newly-elected Prime Minister!"



*"Memorise a letter, Miss Spelman."*

### *Times Aren't What They Were.*

ONCE upon a time there was a person at school called Rosamond, and once upon another time she would have been referred to as a little girl, being only eight years old. But naturally one wouldn't expect her to stand for anything like that in these days, and she'd quite trained her mother and everybody else to refer to her in the terms employed above.

One day the mother was getting ready for her usual rather exhausting shopping expedition—which she did by hitching up her slacks, lighting a fresh cigarette, and pulling on a coat but no hat—when Rosamond said: "Actually, Mummie, I'm coming with you."

"Okay," said Rosamond's mother, seeing there was no help for it.

They tried for three buses, saw there wasn't a hope, and walked as far as the High Street, where, as usual, all

the shoppers, evacuees, members of the Forces (male and female) and friendly aliens (though friendly was no word to describe the way they shoved and pushed) in the whole of the British Isles appeared to be moving slowly up and down the pavements or else standing stock-still looking in at the shop windows.

Rosamond and her mother did a bit of this last themselves.

"Gosh!" said Rosamond suddenly, "there's a bun in that window! No wonder there's such a crowd."

The shop window was, indeed, attracting attention, for every other confectioner's window had just got plates and dishes with nothing but paper doilies on them—and even they oughtn't to have been there, in view of what the authorities said in millions and millions of leaflets about strict economy in the use of paper.

"The queue is ten miles long, anyway," said Rosamond's mother. It was scarcely an exaggeration, because the original queue, composed of people who had actually *seen* the bun and wanted it, had been increased by a number of other people who'd just seen the queue and thought they might as well join it in case it meant cheese, sweets, or practically anything else in the world.

Rosamond's mother, who wasn't specially queue-minded, went on, and after some hard work got her tea ration, a nice bit of marge, and a dear little egg that had actually come all the way from New Zealand and was to be a regular stand-by for the whole of the coming month.

The mother then suggested to Rosamond that they should call it a day, but Rosamond replied with the rather fatal words: "Actually, Mummie, I



was wondering if you actually wanted all your clothes-coupons. I do *frightfully* need a pair of blue suede brogues with square red toes and red-and-blue strings."

Whether by a coincidence or not, they were at that moment looking in at a shoe-shop window where just exactly such a pair of shoes could be seen in Rosamond's size.

The mother, feeling rather desperate—for she had meant to get herself a useful pair of scarlet silk house-pyjamas with her remaining coupons—made an effort to distract her child's attention.

"There's an absolutely divine collection of jars and bowls in the next window. Wouldn't you rather have one of those for the flowers and things that you bring in from your Nature-rambles at school?" she asked.

Rosamond, in her own words, took a rather dim view of this suggestion.

However, she cast an eye on the jugs and bowls and suddenly took a rather wizard view of a large purple jar.

"Honestly, I think you'd do better with that than with the shoes," declared her mother, thinking of absolutely nothing except her own diminishing stock of coupons.

And at last Rosamond said: Okay, she'd take the purple jar instead of the shoes.

And did her mother rush into that shop or did she rush, before Rosamond should change her mind!

The purple jar was very expensive because, as the young lady behind the counter explained, things of that kind were all wanted for munitions now and the stock couldn't be renewed, and it would really be a saving in the long run to buy up a dozen *now*, while they were still there to be had. She could, she thought, just make up the dozen for them.

"There'll be no more till after the war, madam," she said, and Rosamond said: "Gosh! they'd better hurry up and end the war, hadn't they?"

Her mother then turned down the eleven other purple jars and the young lady took the original one out of the window and just handed it over in a complete state of nature and said, No, it couldn't possibly be wrapped up in any way.

So Rosamond, after using some words that she said people always used at school, took the purple jar, and her mother hadn't got the nerve to suggest that she should carry it carefully.

Rosamond did not, however, drop it till they were running, for the fourth time, after a bus that they'd have missed anyhow, jar or no jar.

Next day she got the necessary clothes-coupons off her mother and went off and got the shoes, so all was well that ended well—except just for the motorist whose tyres were punctured by five large pieces of purple glass.

E. M. D.

o o

## The Billet

OUR Company has changed its quarters again. This time we are in a large country house standing in a magnificent park, and the effect upon Sapper Symphon has been disastrous. Apparently at one time in his chequered civilian career he used to have friends who lived in houses like this, and when his mind wanders, which is more often than not, he momentarily forgets that he is in the Army and fancies that he is here as the guest of some long-bankrupt lord.

"Put out the plus-fours," were his waking words the other morning, "and I will take my bath cold."

A tendency to loll about in arm-chairs (a few very shabby ones were left by the late owner) does not endear him to Corporal Bayne, and the Corporal feels that it is adding insult to injury when Symphon, asked to "get cracking" on a fatigue, replies lightly: "See if you can make up a foursome without me to-day, old man. I think I'll just take things easy."

Even worse has been the effect of our new quarters on Sapper Drool, who was a butler before he was called up. He is the O.C.'s batman at present, and his manner towards the O.C. becomes less and less military as the influence of the place grows upon him. Major Corcoran had to speak to him severely the other day for carrying Company Orders about on a tin plate, which was the nearest he could get to a silver salver. Captain Crypt, too, complained to the Major about Sapper Drool giving up the practice of saluting and substituting a deferential bow and a slight rubbing together of the hands.

Lieutenant Findon, however, said that he found Drool's new manner rather restful, and offered to change his own batman, a man named Weed, for the Major's Drool, throwing in a gramophone as make-weight.

Whatever his faults, however, Drool has not gone so far as Symphon in one way. Symphon has been trying to work up a sort of gay house-party

atmosphere in the Company. One night he made Corporal Bayne an apple-pie bed, but instead of laughing uproariously as he should have done, the Corporal simply tipped Symphon's bed to one side so that he rolled to the floor, and then grabbed his blankets and took his place in it.

Symphon has also developed an old-world courtesy at meal-times that is extremely irritating to men who are almost invariably in a hurry. If he happens to be "end man" at the table, and thus responsible for the delicate job of "dishing out" the food, he wastes valuable seconds by saying: "Will you take a little custard with your prunes, Sapper Purver? Can I tempt you with a little of this excellent beef, Sapper Blood? It is from the Home Farm..."

The combination of Symphon and Drool as mess-waiters, when the O.C. happened to be away for a week and thus had no need of a batman, was extremely disturbing, and their politeness began to affect the other men. Driver Mulligan, whose table-manners are notoriously zoological, threatened to give Driver Dodds a "— sock in the — eye" if Driver Dodds would not change kidneys with him, Driver Mulligan having accidentally dropped Driver Dodds' kidney in Sapper Purver's tea as he passed Driver Dodds' mess-tin up the table.

This Sir Charles Grandison attitude fills our C.S.M. with horror. He fears that we are becoming soft, and hopes that we will soon be moved to a disused workhouse infirmary or a ruined gaol.

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## Cry of the Wishful Thinker

WHY have the Fates been so unkind?

I share my home with one who is Incapable of being blind  
To painful probabilities.

I know he is a worthy man,  
He does not smoke, he does not drink;

But worse, far worse, he never can  
Allow me wishfully to think.

A. W. B.

o o

"However serious the water situation was there is no evidence that food supplies were anything like approaching exhaustion, though it appears to be confirmed that the Italians were reduced to a single meal daily, which the Germans are still receiving."

Daily Paper.

Trust them.

The fact that goods made of raw materials in short supply owing to war conditions are advertised in this paper should not be taken as an indication that they are necessarily available for export.

## Left-Hand Drive—No Signals Given

**T**ICKLISHER was what is called the "personnel manager" in a big City office. Nobody could imagine how, even in war-time, he had got the job, or how, with his disposition, he held it. After the talk about "anti-personnel bombs" some people began to call him the anti-personnel manager, and that was indeed nearer the truth.

He was a slight, sulky-looking blond man with glasses and a convex upper lip that gave the vague impression of having recently supported some kind of moustache, and his capacity for considering the feelings of others was atrophied from long disuse, if in fact he had been born with any. When something came into his head to say he said it, no matter whether anybody else was speaking at the time. Since his voice resembled a cross between Charles Boyer's and Popeye's, he had things conversationally as otherwise pretty much his own way.

It used to surprise people to hear that he was a vegetarian; there is a tendency to assume that vegetarians, though not necessarily always mild and inoffensive, are certainly never overbearing and harsh. That may be the rule, but if so Ticklisher and Hitler are among the exceptions.

"I always feel," said a man named Hong once, "that Ticklisher should wear a mock-turtleneck sweater."

Hong was the manager of a laundry, who had had bitter experiences once or twice when hopefully lunching with Ticklisher in search of custom. He said it when the last such occasion was still rankling in his mind.

He had been anxious to make a good impression, forgetting that Ticklisher was simply incapable of receiving any kind of impression unless he happened actively to want it. They went to the restaurant and got a table, and when the waiter came Hong was in the middle of explaining something about how he had spent the week-end tinkering with his emergency electric-lighting system. Ticklisher, who had of course not been listening anyway, said loudly "I don't eat meat. Take that away," and he pushed aside the menu which the waiter had propped in front of him.

The waiter began "Everything we have is on there, Sir—"

"Bring me," Ticklisher interrupted without paying the slightest attention, "a portion of sprouts; and a portion of *sauté* potatoes; and a portion of spinach; and some celery. Tomato sauce."

"Sorry, Sir, no tomato sauce. And no *sauté* potatoes, or fried. We can't get the fat."

Ticklisher took no notice. He was reading a newspaper, and partly hiding Hong from view behind it, so that the hesitant waiter forgot him and after a moment sidled glumly off, under the spell of the more powerful and repellent personality. Hong said "I'll have—" but the waiter had gone.

Hong was very much put out; this was almost exactly what had happened when he had lunched with Ticklisher before. Swearing to himself, he got up and ran after the waiter to give his order, and was coming back slightly mollified by the man's apology when he tripped and fell heavily over a Service gas-mask on the floor between the tables. He got back to his seat covered with dust and crumbs, angrily brushing them off. Ticklisher was still reading his paper and took absolutely no notice at all.

Lunch went badly, with very little talk; Hong was fuming, Ticklisher was pondering the news. On the way back to their offices afterwards it happened that they had to cross the road just behind a stationary ambulance. It

was a gift ambulance from America and had a small notice on the back: "LEFT-HAND DRIVE—NO SIGNALS GIVEN." Hong was impressed by this and though normally diffident was now still so worked up that he said to Ticklisher:

"You know, Ticklisher, that reminds me of you. It's just like you. You think you're made differently from other people and you just behave as if they've got to lump it. Only you don't hang your notice up. You leave people to find out. I really do think—"

"Well," Ticklisher interrupted in his harsh voice (and Hong subsided, repenting of his words and wondering how he could imply that he had not meant them)—"well, I'm sure it'll snow again before the afternoon's out. I'm glad I brought my thick coat."

He stamped into the doorway of his office, leaving several splashes of slush on Hong's trousers. R. M.

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## This Happy Breed

(Written in Bed)

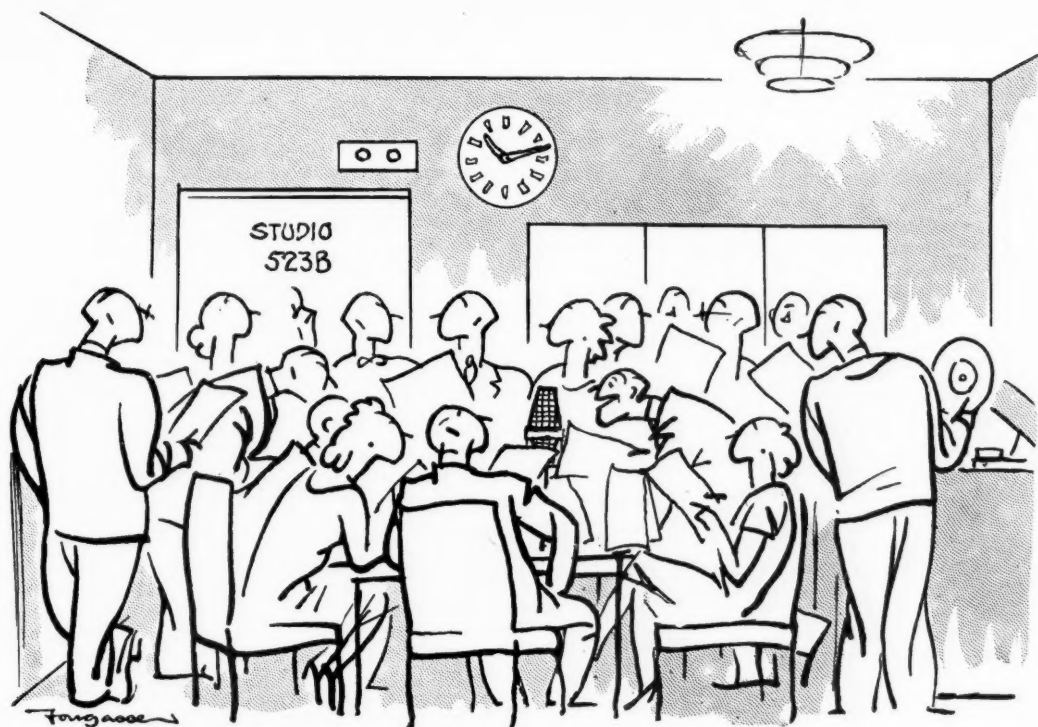
**W**HEN the membrane's congelation  
Tells of inner inflammation  
And catarrhal sounds afflict the public ear;  
When the throat becomes corrosive  
And the cough a high explosive,  
Till the person is unpleasant to be near;  
When the nervous view with panic  
Sternutation so volcanic  
And the handkerchiefs at hand do not suffice;  
When alarm at his condition  
Moves near neighbours to petition—  
It is *then* that British grit exacts its price.

He responds with brave assurance  
(And an air of grim endurance)  
When we tell him that he ought to be in bed;  
At some figure under zero  
He assumes the rôle of hero—  
By such stoics is the season's culture spread.  
For the sower of sore troubles  
Glances blandly round and bubbles  
That he's "quide all ride"—we "bustn't really bind,"  
And, with conscious courage glowing,  
Stagger out, although it's snowing,  
Leaving all his best bacteria behind. . . .

*Hypochondria inverted,  
Open-windowed and thin-shirted,  
Makes the common cold most common to our kind!*

## THE WORLD WAR

**T**HE British Navy is now facing danger in most of the seas of the world. Remember, it is to the sacrifices of these sailors that you owe many of the comforts of civilized life which you still enjoy. In return, will you not contribute to the PUNCH COMFORTS FUND? A gift to this Fund enables you to express your gratitude in tangible form. You owe it to our sailors to see that they are well provided with extra comforts this winter. Donations will be gratefully received and acknowledged by Mr. Punch at PUNCH COMFORTS FUND, 10 Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4.



"... and now, my proud beauty, scream your loudest—who is there to hear, ha-ha, in this deserted spot? !!!"

## Moonshine

IT was an exquisite night, with great clouds moving across a star-laden sky. Unfortunately its beauty was ruined by the moon being that unconvincing shape it assumes a few days before it is full. I went in to get the telescope we had almost made up our minds to send to the Navy. Perhaps it would look less ridiculous through that... It was much better, as the bulge now became a jagged edge; those smudgy marks must be mountains and lakes. One could see it was a world and not only a decoration on our sky.

Going indoors again, for it was too cold to be poetical, I considered how much the moon had been fancied by others than the poets. Very likely the most extravagant prophecies weren't off the mark at all; there were masses of scientific things which Leonardo and people had thought of which were now commonplace.

I began to think it quite likely that in the next war I would be an evacuee to the moon. Being a foreigner as well

as a paying guest, I would behave with consummate tact and consideration, and would of course be extremely useful; there would be so much I could teach them, poor things. About electricity, and gas; how wonderful our lighting system was, it came in little tubes, made of iron; there were cylinders, and the voltage, watts too, and then the metre... No. I'd tell them about our clothes first: you got some wool and you kind of twisted it about into a long thin shape, and then you put other bits on the top and sort of threaded it in and out, but first of all you had to make a loom; that meant cutting some wood... Or about soap, that would be lovely for them. You get hold of some fat—whales, I thought, were the thing, and put some scent—oh! roses, put in the sun in water, or was it on trays? I know, I'd explain about printing first. I'd seen over *The Times*. It was very simple: you had little letters made of something or other, and you put them on shelves in rows, and you got some black wet stuff called

ink and smeared it all over the letters; but then you had to have flat white stuff called paper...

One thing was clear, that Christmas book-token would be wasted on a child of five; he should spend it on a Children's Encyclopædia, and then I could annex it, for it would be ages before he was old enough to protest.

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### A Nasty One

"Despite the handicap of terrible cold the Germans did fight their rearguard action backwards from Mojaik and in a number of strong points to the south-west with sang froid."—*Daily Paper*.

o o

### H'm

"At 8—Y.P.S., Pencoeed, on Monday week a Bible class was held, presided over by Miss ——. There was a good number present and a keen discussion took place on the subject 'Are there stages in Sin?' On Monday night a practical class was held."—*Welsh Paper*.





"I wish I hadn't bought your mother that squirrel coat."

## For the Love of Mike

(A Broadcaster's Soliloquy)

**T**IME was  
I loved it not, the mystic microphone.  
In some confined and subterranean crypt,  
Cooped with its faceless visage and my script,  
I did my stuff, disconsolate, alone—  
Because,

"Lord knows,"

I used to think, addressing only it,

"If anyone is hearing what I say."

It made no answer, nor did it convey

Blame or approval. There the thing would sit,  
Morose

And dead.

"Give me," I thought, "yes, any time you like,  
Folks in the flesh who hear and understand—  
The laugh, the murmur of assent, the hand;

Give me the rostrum. You can have the mike  
Instead."

And yet . . .

Are audiences all the time a boon?  
What of that brute afflicted with a cough  
He will not stifle? How they put one off,

Those who arrive too late, who leave too soon!  
How fret

And fuss

The orator those blocks of countenance  
(Fish, frog or rabbit) waxen, muscle-bound,  
That stare and stare unblinking in profound

Non-comprehension! . . . Give the mike a chance;  
As thus—

It does

Not sniff or sneeze or blow its nose or snort,  
Shuffle its feet or scratch itself or scrape  
Its chair about, nudge, whisper, goof or gape

Or look a fool. The thing has points, in short;  
It has.

And so

I soften to this gadget without soul  
Which, if it cannot help, does not impede.

It has its compensations—yes, indeed.

Do I in fact prefer it? On the whole?

Yes? No?

H. B.

## A Patch on Cyrano

**W**HEN you are in the R.A.F. you sleep in huts  
mostly, with a lot of others.

Of course if you're a sergeant or something it  
doesn't apply, but there's what they call N.C.O. i/c these  
huts who's supposed to be in charge. All he does is shout  
at people to get up in the mornings and rake and polish  
and anything he doesn't like doing himself.

I slept next to him in our hut because I was the one that  
came last. Corporal Angus, his name was, though he was  
known to us as Ginger.

Why he was called Ginger I don't know, because the hair  
he'd got was hardly coloured at all, but he had a queer  
temperament to make up for it.

Also he snored and moaned at pay-nights and week-ends,  
and, personally, he wasn't a man I'd fancy working under,  
but him being in the stores and me being around aeroplanes  
the question didn't arise much.

As it happened, we'd got on better terms than might be  
expected owing to some pilot blowing my cap away on his  
propellers. This Corporal got me another one on the grounds  
of it, and I made him a heart brooch with LOVE on one side  
and 1941 the other. Also I could play the mouth-organ.

One evening when I was playing some tunes he liked and  
he was supposed to be singing he suddenly asked if I  
knew Rosie.

I took it for one of those jokes, but it turned out to be  
some girl in the plug-cleaning bay.

"Isn't she the one with the kink in her nose?" I said.

"That cheese, merciful whatshisnames," he said. "I mean  
Rosie the girl with the golden hair."

I said nothing to avoid argument over it.

"Play that one about you must have been a beautiful  
baby," he said.

I was on to the "Lost Chord" before he spoke any more.  
Then he let go about how he was over this Rosie.

The snag with it all was that Rosie wasn't so struck on  
her side. She seemed to have the idea he drank and that  
and wasn't much use as a permanency.

"I wouldn't say that exactly," I said.

"That's where you come in," he said.

Where I came in was to tell Rosie what a wonderful chap  
he was when you got to know him.

"I don't like it," I said.

"It'll cost you nothing," he said.





"Might I suggest two pairs, Sir? They'll probably soon be making standard shoes, Sir, all of them very light brown, and all the same size."

He'd worked it out for me to meet them accidentally outside the first house of the Empire, and take my cues as I found them. If it came off he wanted to change my working trousers.

"You can help them where they're thin," he said. "Besides it's now or never with Rosie."

Well, I don't like deceit but the trousers were going fast at the knees anyway and no doubt Rosie could do worse.

"All right, then," I said; "for you far more than the trousers." There wasn't much time to clean up. As it was I had to dodge round some corners to get there first.

"Fancy meeting you," said Ginger. The W.A.A.F. he'd got was the one with the kink in her nose.

"I was thinking of going in," I said.

I suppose it all passed off somehow. Inside we had seats in the front row, and those cigars you got out of a packet.

The show was called *Soir des Filles* for some reason. Rosie laughed most of the time and kept nudging us to laugh. The only turn I fancied though was a cyclist on one wheel. At the interval Ginger went out as a cue.

At that this W.A.A.F. had to put her spoke in by slipping out the opposite way. I cleared off for a beer while I was waiting. When I came back Rosie was sitting in my seat because of a chap blowing a trombone.

"That's done it," I said to myself.

Ginger didn't look too pleased either at the seat between us.

"What's up?" he said, during some girls jumping about. I pointed to the chap playing the trombone.

"Who is he?" said Ginger.

"He's nobody," I said. To show him I took my pipe out and acted as if I were blowing a trombone on the quiet. Unluckily the band stopped for a girl to do somersaults

and a loud squeak came out. Everybody turned round and said shush, including Rosie. The result was that at the end we'd got nowhere in spite of it all.

"I could do with a pint," I said.

"You'd better join us at the Cosy Café," said Ginger.

Over some chips and tea I got a cue by Ginger loudly going off for his cigarettes.

I was on about love being a funny thing when I suddenly got a kick in the boot. It was Ginger. All he'd been doing was getting the Woodbines out of his overcoat.

Well, it was no use going on like this.

"There's somebody after you in the next room," I said.

"I know that," said Ginger, glaring.

Rosie was singing about Hi-de-Ho.

"Now he's gone," I said, "you might as well know Ginger's crazy about you."

"Ginger?" said Rosie.

"Ginger," I said. "The best fellow that ever walked."

"How that boy can dance!" said Rosie.

"Dance," I said, "he's got medals for it."

The character I gave him on top of his saving my life at Portsmouth or somewhere practically knocked Rosie right over.

"Oh, dear!" she said. "And I never knew."

"There you are," I said.

"Shush," said Rosie. It was Ginger smirking closer.

Well, Rosie laughed most of the way home, Ginger gave me the thumbs-up, and altogether it seemed a pretty good turn out.

Unfortunately I spent the next few days sleeping in a field with some aeroplanes, and only came in to change my trousers.

"Show those to Corporal Angus," I said. "He knows the position." The answer was to put me on a charge for malicious damage to Government property, viz. trousers, and this Corporal Angus was telling them how I'd done it.

I caught him in the wash-house for an explanation or I'd know the reason why, and it appeared I'd ruined his life.

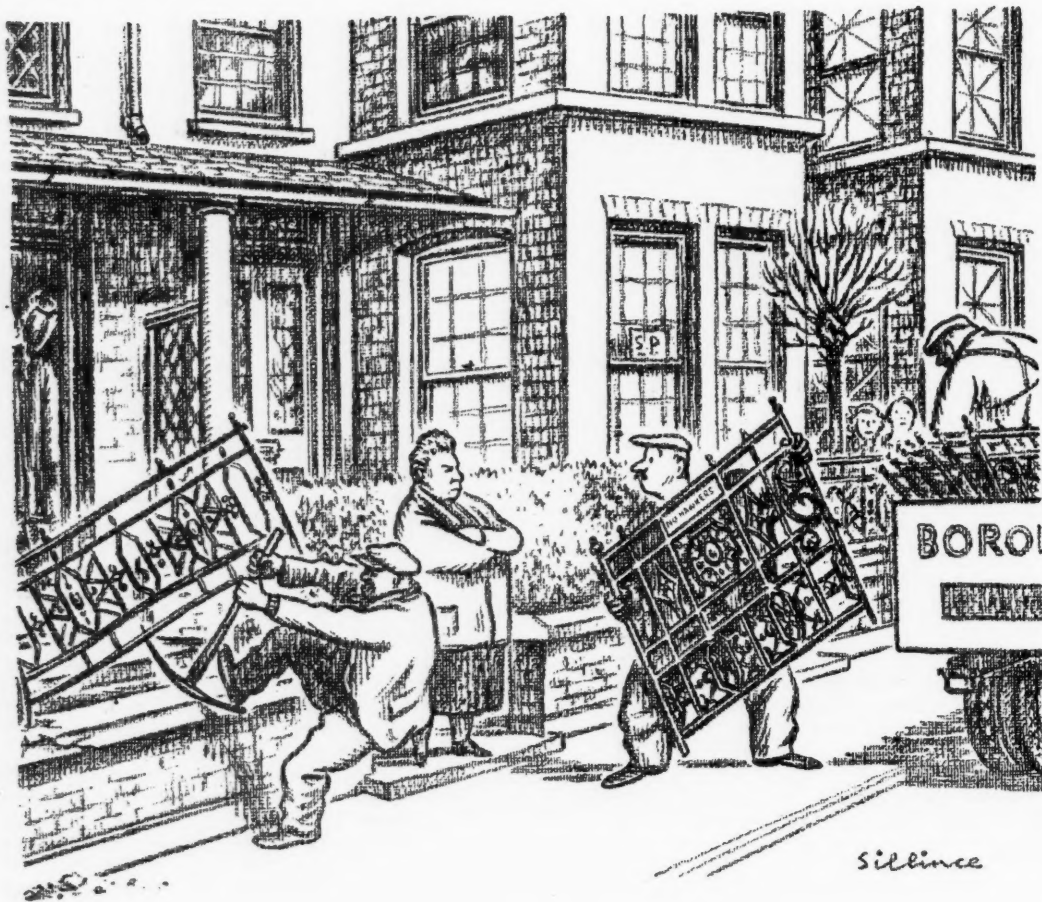
Rosie had gone off with a red-headed chap in the workshops and didn't know how to thank me for it.

I pointed out that no W.A.A.F. was worth the trick he'd played on my trousers, but he blamed me for everything. It was my fault for Rosie's thick head, not knowing the girls called him Waffle, and this workshops Ginger, and there was no arguing with him.

For that matter, I was going to leave the hut anyway.



"One lump or none, Sir?"



*"I assume they'll be returned to me in good condition after the war."*

### *Note on the Passing of an Ancient Amusement*

THE child I was, sturdy in reefer blue  
 With scarlet tam and gaiters just too  
 short,  
 That child, unlike the present children, knew  
 A disapproved-of but delighting sport.  
 Clear from the past imagination flames!  
 Hoop-stick in hand (its hoop in adult care  
 Along the evening street; parks were for games)  
 The player dawdled home—till Belgrave Square.  
 High railings that around the garden stood  
 Turned then by magic to a giant harp,  
 Iron-strung with music kitchen-like but good,  
 That spoke in London's mumble strongly sharp.

To make such music all you had to do  
 Was drag the stick along the bars and run.  
 I still can hear the sound! The feeling, too—  
 Vibrations buzzing up the arm—was fun.

The parks and squares seem greener and more gay  
 Since all the railings have been felled for war,  
 And though they gave some pleasure in their day  
 London looks friendlier than it did before.

J. G.

"For sale, Burning Peat and Wood Logs. Apply . . ."  
*Advt. in Oxford Paper.*  
 And be quick about it.



THE GREAT FIGHT OF MACARTHUR



## Impressions of Parliament

### Business Done

**Tuesday, February 3rd.**—House of Lords: A Tale of India; The Merchant Navy is Given Hope.

House of Commons: A Desert Song.

**Wednesday, February 4th.**—House of Commons: A Game of Chance is Played.

**Thursday, February 5th.**—House of Commons: The Chilterns and So On.

**Tuesday, February 3rd.**—Russian Trade Union delegates were present at to-day's sitting of the Commons. They looked a little astonished to see vast expanses of empty bench, with here and there a hopeful would-be speaker.

Someone remarked that it was a good thing that they could not understand English. To which a wit replied: "No, but they can count!"

For (whatever the censorable reason) the attendance certainly was extremely "thin." Maybe the excitement of the previous week's vote-of-confidence debate had been too much for the Members. The backwoodsmen had returned to their backwoods, the country-lovers to their country love, leaving an air of almost sylvan repose for those few who remained.

Ministers are swift to react to the lassitude of the House, and questions were both asked and answered in something of the "whimsy" atmosphere of a *BARRIE* play.

Sir HERBERT WILLIAMS, for instance, wanted trains to go *slower* in order that the trains (as well as the travelling time) might be *longer*.

Whereupon Mr. DAVID KIRKWOOD roused himself enough to announce in the thunderous brogue with which he charms friend and foe, that "if they were any slower-r-r they wouldna ar-r-r-rive at all!"

The House laughed dreamily. Then Miss THELMA CAZALET, who contrives always to combine the freshness of springtime with either the sunshine of (oratorical) summer or the frostiness of (logical) winter, brought everybody back to wakefulness with such a thump that one could almost hear the gasps. It all happened so suddenly. Miss CAZALET asked an innocent-seeming question about a committee to look into conditions of service in the women's Services.

"Certainly!" said Mr. ATTLEE, all suave. "There will be a committee. It will consist of Sir VICTOR WARREN- DER, for the Navy, Sir EDWARD GRIGG, for the Army, Captain BALFOUR for the R.A.F., and Mr. RALPH

committee, to look into conditions of service in the *women's Services*, consists entirely of *men*?"

"And *young men*, at that!" rapped seventy-years-old Miss RATHBONE, eyeing with disfavour Sir EDWARD GRIGG, who is nearly eight years her junior.

The four young men laughed self-consciously.

But the lady Members, like another Great Lady of history, were not amused. They looked grimly at the LORD PRIVY SEAL, whose unlucky star (or is it genius?) had run him into yet another row. He gave the whole thing up, sank lower and lower on his seat and assumed the well-known characteristics of Brer Rabbit.

"O.K.," said Miss RATHBONE (still in effect). "So you won't talk—eh? Right! Then I'll raise the whole matter on the adjournment."

And out stalked the women Members to hold an indignation meeting. The men settled down to their somnolence once more, but things were never quite the same.

Sir CHARLES EDWARDS, Deputy Chief Government Whip, blandly rose from the *Opposition Front Bench* and asked his fellow-Minister, Mr. ATTLEE, to announce the business. An admirable example of Governmental co-operation, one thought.

But rather too admirable, thought Lord WINTERTON, who, as an old Parliamentary hand, knows about, and treasures, the Parliamentary proprieties.

In tones as honeyed as any Deputy Chief Whip's, he asked whether *all* Sir CHARLES's colleagues of the Whips' Office could not line up on the *Opposition Bench*, and just keep the whole thing in the Governmental family. Mr. SHINWELL endorsed this idea, asking who should better be qualified to ask a Minister about future business than another Minister.

Turning uneasily in their semi-wakefulness, Members shushed the noisy ones, and there was silence again for Mr. ANTHONY EDEN's announcement that Britain had concluded an agreement with Ethiopia, restoring that country's freedom, and the long-suffering Emperor TAFARI to his throne.

By a pretty piece of poetic justice the Emperor is to have a nice new Army, fully equipped with booty taken from the Italians.

Their Lordships talked of India.

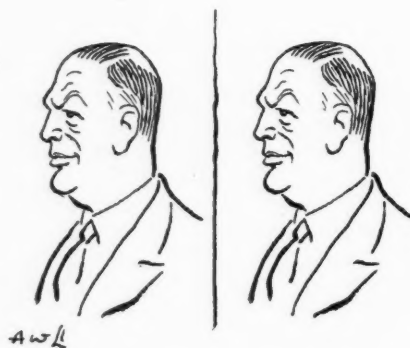


THE THORN-EXTRACTOR

Anthony Androcles' good turn to the "Lion of Judah"

ASSHETON, for the Ministry of Labour."

Miss ELEANOR RATHBONE and Miss IRENE WARD sat up as if they had



CHANGES IN THE GOVERNMENT

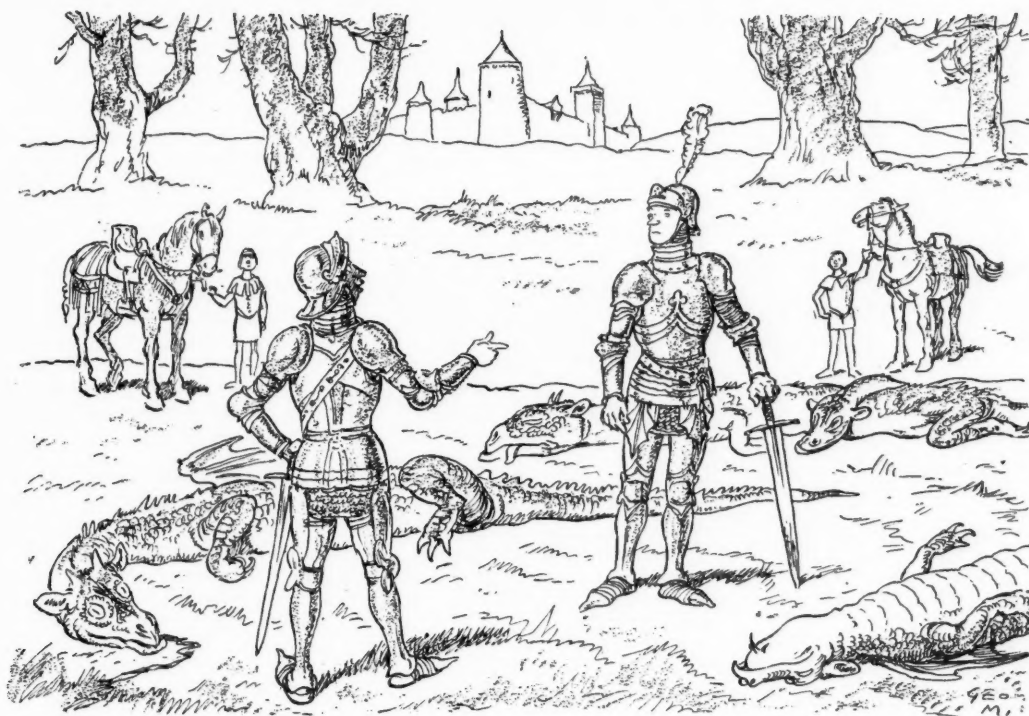
### MINISTRY OF SUPPLY

October 1940	February 1942
SIR ANDREW DUNCAN	SIR ANDREW DUNCAN

been the victims of a peashooter sniper. Then they stood up. Then they spoke up.

"What's the big idea?" they said (in effect). "How come that this





"I hear they're calling next week to collect our old dragon-skins."

The Labour benches had gone all warlike, with Lord NATHAN (complete with red tabs), Lord LISTOWEL (in a most aggressive—or possibly only warmer—battle-dress) and Lord FARINGDON in what appeared to be the levee dress of the Fire Brigade.

They talked about India and the possibility of settling that distressful country down to something less distressful. Several ideas were put forward to this end, the most interesting being in a maiden speech by Lord (JOSH) WEDGWOOD, that the pay of Indian soldiers should be doubled, and the extra given in land, *après la guerre*.

Lord MARCHWOOD, champion of the Merchant Navy, secured from the Government a promise that something would be done—also *après la guerre*—for that admirable service. Lord MARCHWOOD looked determined that this should be so.

Wednesday, February 4th. — The House of Commons played its annual little game of "Guess who?" the Clerk, Sir GILBERT CAMPION, gravely drawing lots for the right to move motions on

the Estimates. Major LLOYD (evidently of a pessimistic nature) clearly did not expect any luck, and when his name was first out of the hat, was not ready with an idea. Mrs. TATE, on the other hand, was up as soon as the lucky number was mentioned, and had to be restrained, so eager was she to talk about civil aviation—also, incidentally, after the war.

Commander OLIVER LOCKER-LAMPSON is to move a motion on the "scientific lack of education in the R.A.F." That's what he said.

Then the House went on to talk about gin for the natives of foreign parts. It was definitely *not* a spirited debate.

Thursday, February 5th. — The House of Commons patently—and patiently—waited for the long-expected statement on the scope of the new job the versatile Lord BEAVERBROOK is to have, that of Minister of War Production (which many think would have been better named Minister of Peace Production).

But Mr. CHURCHILL, entering with an impressive batch of papers, red-

tabbed "Immediate," had nothing to say on this topic. The papers turned out to be nothing more exciting than answers to unexciting questions.

Mr. GEOFFREY MANDER harked back to the question of Sir CHARLES EDWARDS's place in the scheme of things. Sir CHARLES, who was at that very moment on the Opposition Front Bench, blushed to hear the SPEAKER, in the most diplomatic tones, express the view that it was not a good idea for Ministers to sit on that particular Bench, as it might lead to misunderstandings.

Mr. SHINWELL, with an air of innocence which did not, somehow, ring true, inquired whether it would be in order for the Opposition leaders to take over the Treasury Bench. Which seemed to amuse the PRIME MINISTER as much as it did the rest of the House.

The debate, on offices of profit under the Crown—the Stewardship of the Chiltern Hundreds and such-like—was chiefly interesting for a learned discourse from Sir DENNIS HERBERT, Deputy-Speaker, on the history of these offices.



### Little Talks

**W**HAT would you do if you saw two armed Germans at the bottom of the garden?

*Telephone to the police.*

*But suppose the line's cut?*

*Well, now that you mention it, I'm not quite sure what I should do. What would you?*

*I'm on leave from the Navy. It would be my duty to slosh the enemy.*

*What with?*

*My gas-mask, I suppose. It's all I've got on me.*

*All right then. I'd support you. With a garden-fork.*

*I don't think that would be quite right.*

*Mary would have a go with boiling oil, wouldn't you?*

*If the oil was on the boil. What about you, Tom?*

*I should pop up to John's room and get his '22 rifle.*

*I'm sure that wouldn't be right. None of it.*

*Why not?*

Well, Henry's only a mere civilian.

*I'm a householder!*

Yes, but a mere civilian. And Mary's only a mere ambulance-girl, off duty.

*Tom's A.F.S.*

Makes no difference. None of you, I think, is entitled to slosh the enemy—

*Except you?*

Except me. And at the moment I haven't so much as a torpedo, or even a cutlass, on me.

*Tom's in uniform.*

Yes, but he's not an Armed Force.

*He would be if he had John's '22. The Hun would hate one of those in the eye.*

He mustn't do it. His duty, I fancy, is to go on putting out any fire that may inconvenience the enemy.

*Oh, nonsense!*

Anyhow, I'm sure that it's no part of the duties of an ambulance-girl, trained in the gentle arts of healing, to pour boiling oil on the enemy.

*But why mustn't we slosh the enemy—if we can?*

*Because he'll shoot you.*

*I thought that was the whole idea of war.*

No, the idea is that if you're not in uniform he won't shoot you.

*Then what's the point of his being at war with me?*

You don't seem to understand the elements—

*You're dressed in Navy blue?*

Yes.

*So he'll shoot you. But Tom's dressed in blue too.*

True. So, for the matter of that, is Mary.

*Quite. Well, if we all stand at the dining-room window how's he going to tell which of us is Armed Forces and which is not?*

*Can't imagine.*

*Epecially, as somebody said in the Lords, if there's lots of smoke about.*

Not to mention snow. Well, I dunno. I'm only trying to tell you what the arrangements are, so far as I understand.

*But don't you know? Does nobody know?*

You're the one who ought to know. You're the mere civilian. He shoots me anyhow.

*But how am I to know?*

*Where's your booklet?*

*Booklet?*

Didn't they issue an invasion booklet to every householder last year? I never met a householder who could find his yet, and I've asked dozens; but—

*Never heard of it.*

Half a minute, Henry, dear, I think I know—I always put those things under the blotter—Yes. It isn't a booklet—but is this what you mean?

*Well done, Mary! But why haven't I seen this before?*

Darling, you never did believe in the invasion; and I thought you had quite enough worries without that.

*Well, anyhow, now we shall know. Or shan't we?*

*What does it say?*

Here we are—"The Enemy"—the last paragraph: "Should I defend myself against the enemy?"

*"The enemy is not likely to turn aside to attack separate houses—"*

How do they know that? Suppose he's hungry?

*Shut up. "If small parties are going about threatening persons and property in an area not under enemy control and come your way, you have the right of every man and woman to do what you can to protect yourself, your family and your home." So, you see, I was right!*

Up to a point, perhaps. But I still press my original question: "What would you do if you saw two armed Germans at the end of the garden?"

Well, of course, I'd do just what the instructions say.

What do they say?

Well, they say I have a right to slosh them. I should go in with you.

Do they? They say you can slosh them if odd blots of Huns "come your way" in an area "not under enemy control." How do you know whether your area is "under enemy control" or not?

Oh, I see what you mean. Well, to tell you the truth, I haven't the faintest idea. Well, the B.B.C., I suppose. Perhaps the police.

I see. Well, let's get the picture. Here we all are in the dining-room. There are the two armed Huns at the bottom of the garden. I know where I am. Tom, I suppose, would be in order if he rushed back to his station and reported ready for duty. Mary, too. But you, Henry, the mere householder and civilian, however eager, as I know you would be, to support me in my savage assault upon the two Huns already mentioned—

Using your gas-mask?

Yes. You, Henry, would be entitled to support me only if you were satisfied that your area was not "under enemy control." Now, the point is, how would you know that?

Haven't the faintest.

Well, paragraph 1 gives you a little guidance. It says: "If you see an enemy tank, or a few enemy soldiers, do not assume that the enemy are in control of the area."

That's all right, then. I can come in with you.

All right. But suppose there are ten armed men and two tanks at the garden gate?

Why, then I suppose I retire to the kitchen and make the invaders a cup of tea. Leaving you to your fate.

Even if you had John's '22?

Yes. I'm speaking officially, of course.

And I think you're right. If I throw my gas-mask at the enemy I become an honourable prisoner-of-war, but if you throw your gas-mask at the enemy you're shot as a so-and-so.

That seems a bit hard. Is that guerrilla warfare?

I think, not quite. The idea of guerrilla warfare, as I understand it, is that the enemy is never in control of any area. However many armed Huns are sitting in the dining-room—however many tanks are charging about the streets—you still throw your gas-mask at the enemy, Tom still fires John's '22 at the enemy, and Mary,

if she has any, still pours boiling oil on him.

Where do I find all that in the leaflet?

I don't think you do. It's all "defensive." And everything stops when the enemy's supposed to have won.

But the Russians keep on doing the most annoying things long after the enemy's won!

True.

And our dear "Colonel Britton" keeps urging the captive Europeans to do the most annoying things though he knows quite well that the enemy has won!

True.

Why?

I can't say. I think perhaps this leaflet is a little out-of-date. What, for example, would you do if you heard a church-bell ring?

I should go to church.

Quite wrong. "It is a warning to the local garrison that troops have been seen landing from the air in the neighbourhood of the church in question."

Golly! What do I do then?

Well, it says: "Do not tell the enemy anything. Do not give the enemy anything. Do not help him in any way."

Nothing about my sloshing the enemy?

Not a thing.

My feeling is that no Hun, in any

circumstance, should approach this house without being scared stiff that, quite apart from your throwing your gas-mask (officially) at him, I shall attack him treacherously in the rear with a garden-fork, Tom will shoot him in the stomach with John's '22, and Mary, if the oil is on the boil, will pour boiling oil on him from an upper window. Is there anything about that in the leaflet?

There is not.

Well, then . . .!

There is something in what you say.

A. P. H.

#### A Cut Above

"The next rank to corporal is surgeon."  
Schoolgirl's Essay on "Our Army."

#### Historian's-Headache Corner

"There was no discernible trace of his bad cold in the Prime Minister's voice or demeanour. The voice was strong. The huskiness of a few days ago had gone."

Evening Paper, Jan. 27.

"Mr. Churchill's voice revealed the heavy cold from which he is suffering. At the beginning of his speech his articulation was husky and the House had difficulty in catching all his words."

Same paper, same issue.



"The characters not working in this machine are as follows colon the 'colon' and the 'full stop' full stop."



"... and this particular gas is odourless, tasteless and colourless, and causes no discomfort whatever..."

### Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

#### Waiting for Napoleon

THE summer of 1940 taught us more—but not alas! the last—of those "lessons" which political writers find so consolingly in military reverses. It also wiped out, in effect, a century of our history. England was threatened with invasion, and we knew at last how the English felt while the "Army of England" assembled at Boulogne. In *Britain Against Napoleon* (FABER, 12/6) there are other parallels: plans for evacuation, bombardment of "invasion ports," volunteers drilling on the green, and even an earlier, though inglorious, withdrawal from Dunkirk. But Miss CAROLA OMAN has been charmed by her researches into extending the excursion: one cannot attend exclusively to a war that drags on for twenty years, and even in war-time there was news of Paris hats. So, from the death of the French King to that of NAPOLEON, we read old newspapers as a contemporary, watch the weather, peer over the shoulder of unsuspecting letter-writers, listen to the scandal in the drawing-rooms (in Paris and St. Petersburg, as well as in London), see the steamboat come and the first torpedo fired. Considering how crowded it is with information both trivial and important, it is a remarkably shapely book—an achievement still more remarkable in a miscellany with so accommodating a title. Miss OMAN is apt to fall back on the scene that opens "Promenaders in the Strand might have observed, on a fine spring morning in 1800, a gentleman wearing a small Imperial..." but she is generally quite as graceful in a more original way.

It will be gathered that the book is fascinating, so fascinating that one abandons rules about lending books and forces this one on one's friends.

### Princess Errant

By *Hard Times*, out of *The Prisoner of Zenda*, Mr. VAUGHAN WILKINS' new novel is an unusual mixture of social conscience and picaresque romance. Obviously the Early—very early—Victorian period exhibited elements of both; and their latest manipulator has combined his knowledge with cunning. His rogue-in-chief is VICTORIA's uncle LEOPOLD, whose marriage plans, not only for VICTORIA but for her cousin ANNE LOUISE, are the main-spring of the plot. These are countered in ANNE LOUISE's case by *Seven Tempest* (CAPE, 9/6), a business man suffering from an ardent conviction that the powerful should serve an apprenticeship to power among their victims. Himself the illegitimate son of a Cræsus of similar convictions, *Tempest* has been welded in the lowest circles of the period's industrial hell. His price for aiding ANNE LOUISE to escape from LEOPOLD's machinations is the endurance of a parallel novitiate. One feels throughout that the Ruritania-Coketown rapprochement is rather difficult to sustain; and that ANNE LOUISE, who is the only link between these polar worlds, is distinctly less credible in the second. But the perhaps rather rare reader who is equally interested in both should enjoy an uncommonly piquant juxtaposition of high life and low life.

### The Long Night

In the dedication of his new book, *They Stayed in London* (FABER, 7/6), Dr. GEORGE SAVA writes, "We citizens of London know that London is immortal. Some of us have trembled for her life as well as our own. No need. She is safe against hell's rain in our hearts." He tells many stories of his own life as a surgeon during this war, of a baby born in a blitz just as the lights went out, of a secretary who risked her life for the safety of the blood-transfusion statistics which later saved her, of a warden who swallowed his whistle, and of a nurse who was tempted to poison a wounded German airman on the day she heard of her fiancé's death. The doctor's slightly unEnglish prose stresses the English quality most effectively. He is alternately pitiful, ironical, philosophical and amused. His book, valuable now, should be kept as a treasured trophy to be read again when war is over.

### "Birdie"

When Field-Marshal Lord BIRDWOOD visited Australia in 1919 he received a welcome even more completely overwhelming than that usually reserved for Presidents and film-stars, yet from his own restrained account one would never have imagined him to have been the "Soul of Anzac." In his autobiography—*Khaki and Gown* (WARD, LOCK, 18/-)—his part at the Dardanelles simply falls into place among crowding events, some tremendous, some trivial, that press upon him from Cambridge or Calcutta or from the Western Front, and equally from Ootacamund, say, or Saragarhi, as he recalls old times and well-remembered faces. The brilliant evacuation at Suvla or the crucial counter-attack at Villers Bretonneux, for which he more than any other was responsible, seem to be natural incidents in the normal life of an English army officer selected by good fortune for an interesting command. In the same way it would seem to be the common expectation of any subaltern to spend some forty years in India, mastering half a dozen





Grannie (dragged out of bed at 1.30 a.m. and being hurriedly dressed as the bombs begin to fall). "NANCY, THESE STOCKINGS ARE NOT A FAIR."

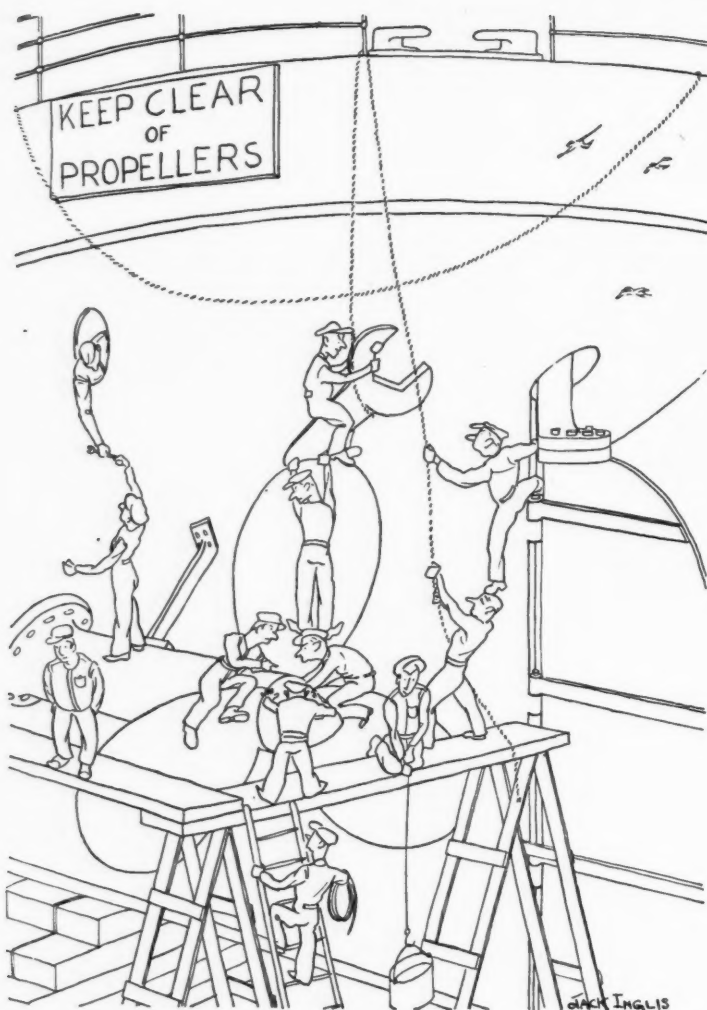
F. H. Townsend, February 16th, 1916

languages, exploring every remote and fascinating province, seeing active service here and there, finally becoming Commander-in-Chief. This lack of dramatic quality is disappointing in a volume built on tremendous experiences, yet no one should miss reading it. After all, a Lord BIRDWOOD has no need to claim the technique of a descriptive writer, and the book does give something of the man himself.

### The Sick Man of Europe

That Prussianism is not a matter of locality or race but a specific malady of the soul, is the sound conclusion of Mr. S. D. STIRK's literary and political survey of *The Prussian Spirit, 1914-1940* (FABER, 12/6). A *Wahl-Preussen* like HITLER is obviously a deadlier social menace than a *Geburts-Preussen* like NIEMÖLLER; and decent Prussians

who lent a beguiled ear to the first Orphic harpings of National Socialism soon found themselves falling out into concentration camps. Like most intellectuals, however, the author fails to note that HITLER's initial programme promised to answer genuine (and disregarded) human needs; and it is absurd to argue that his notion of England as a pluto-democracy was derived solely from the ravings of Prussian doctrinaires. This comparative harshness with the German past comes all the more oddly from one who disclaims any future seizure of East Prussia or any future resolving of Germany into small states. (A little more regional coupled with a little more world government might be good for all of us.) This, however, is an erudite and occasionally a very amusing book. Particularly delightful is STAPEL's ideal *junker* who, when there is no one about to command, is enjoined to practise on his dog.



## Rural Exchanges

**T**O reach our market-town you take the first turn to the left on entering Scotland and keep (or haud) straight on.

You mustn't ask (or even spear). The people, it is true, are politeness itself. A bright young Intelligence Officer who walked down our main street, dressed, as an experiment, in the full kit of a German parachutist, asking to be directed, please, "to the nearest search-lighting battery," was thrice most punctiliously pointed on his way. Moreover, the directions agreed: following them up, he found himself, without encountering any molestation, far along the lonely track which ends at the municipal incinerator. He hadn't once smelt a rat. And,

up there, the Home Guard say, he couldn't have.

The town is marked on the quarter-inch map by a small black oblong; but this gives a poor idea of its attractions.

On a larger scale, the black oblong opens out, and is decorated at the centre with the letters *P. t.* (signifying one large post office and one small telephone-system), and at each side with a conventional sign, the first for a church or chapel with spire; the second for another church or chapel with another spire. The non-sectarian Ordnance survey has not indicated the relative heights of the two spires, but the figures are a source of considerable jubilation to the one church and of marked despondency to the other.

Though they are now happily joined, the United Presbyterian Weather-Cock has crowed over the Established Wind-Vane for many years from a superior altitude of fully three feet. The oldest inhabitant tells how he once sat for his photograph astride the cock, gazing out to the U.P. (or True) North. With commendable foresight, his father realized the distinction which this would confer on his small son eighty years later, and placed him on the tip of the steeple while the masons were blowing on their hands before hoisting it into position.

Within the *P. t.* lives Mrs. Barbour, in private life a successful kitchen-gardener (worried from time to time by hearing of the leaks in our blockade); in her public capacity, telephone-operator. At the beginning of the war she was impressed by the wisdom of every scheme by which it might be rendered more difficult for an enemy agent to impersonate any public servant in a key position. When I took down the receiver one morning I heard a voice saying, "Telegram for Number 2 6 8 and this is Mrs. Barbour reading it."

She came to us as a vast improvement on her predecessor. Under the old regime (which left us for the A.T.S. and, we hope, K.E.E.P.S.) one was frequently driven to pause in a conversation in order to say sharply: "Stop listening!" And quite often came the answer, "I'm *not* listening." She was a voracious reader of those novels in which the young man, introduced to mother, always falls in love with her. The wiser girls of the period took to locking up even their grandmothers in the attic.

Mrs. Barbour is different. Her interest in your affairs is wholly altruistic. "Two-Six-Eight," I will say, speaking from the office, and wait for my wife to reply. Instead, the calm voice of Mrs. Barbour will say, "I won't put you through for a wee while, for I saw her coming out of the butcher's this very minute."

The new doctor, dictating a telegram, wanted to have his favourite little joke, and ended with, "*W* for Whooping-cough, *I* for Influenza, *L* for Laryngitis, *S* for Stomach-ache, *O* for Ophthalmia, *N* for Neuritis—WILSON." His telephone-bell tinkled while he was at dinner and Mrs. Barbour's gentle voice inquired, "Doctor, is that you? How would you spell yon 'laryngitis'?"

"My good woman!" he spluttered; "you're not to telegraph all that!"

"I know fine, doctor. It's just your wee joke. But it sounded like the very thing I want for my crossword. Sor-ry you were both-thered."

## Me and My Aunt

(By Smith Minor)

UNLESS you have forgotten, wick you may have, why not, you will remember that once or twice I have told you about an aunt I have who is not very chearful, in fact you might almoast call her a living toombe of whoe, and who I go sometimes to try and chear up, not always doing it, in fact never. But we keap on hoping, becorse,

"Stoubt hearts shuold persevear untill

What erst they cuold not do, they will,"

so we think that perhaps one time I may.

The last time I tried was on her birthday, that is, one of them. She wrote me a letter asking if I wuold come, but I felt even more sure than ushuel that I wuoldn't be of any use becorse, honestly, she seamed in such deapths of despare that one wondered if even a heard of wild elephants cuold of dragged her out. To menshun only five of her trubbles, there were eleven, (1) her head was geting worse, (2) she had lost another tooth, leaving only fifteen, we count, (3) all her taps neaded new waschers, (4) she felt more and more that nobody really loved her, and (5) her butcher was sending her nothing but grizzle. Mind you, she never complanes, you mustn't think it, but, well, she jest tells things to me, knowing I don't mind, and there not seaming to be anyone else.

Well, I decided to try and buck her up with a jolly good present, but as I cuoldn't think of one, you see I wanted it to be chearful, I asked Green if he wuold help me, he having seen my aunt once, and being the kind of chap to help anybody, though, mind you, me most.

"We must think," he said.

"I have thort," I said.

"What have you thort?" he said.

"Nothing," I said.

"Then how can you say you have thort?" he said.

"You can think of nothing," I said.

"What with?" he said.

"I see what you mean," I said.

I didn't, but when he begins getting like this you have to say you do to stop him, only this time it didn't stop him, he going on,

"I've worked out that when you think you're thinking of nothing you're not thinking, becorse when

you start thinking you have to think of something, it may be how to win the war or jest a green rabbit, but it must be something, or you're not thinking."

"There isn't such a thing as a green rabbit," I said.

"No, I grant you," he said, "but you can think of it."

Then I really did see what he meant, and I asked him to think of my aunt.

You can always tell when Green thinks, his forrid riples like a smoothe sea o'er wick come suden waives, and when it begins to get almoast roufh you know he's on to something. And, lo! now he was!

"I've got it," he said.

"What?" I said. "I hope it's not a green rabbit."

"No, but it's a green parot," he said.

"Has your aunt got one?"

"No," I said.

"Then that's what is the matter with her," he said. "All aunts who live alone shuold have a parot."

"My hat," I said, twigging it. "You mean to tork to?"

"Yes," he said, "or she'll start torking to herself till she goes batts."

How was that for hot? But then Green is.

Note. If the reader shuold think it funny that Green, being named Green, shuold think of green things, it realy isn't, becorse that's why he dose it. End of note.

Well, we legged it to an animel shop, we know one, and by a stroke of luck the shopman had two parots left, both green. The luck was becorse he told us they were going like hot cakes, and we were only jest in time. Wuold you beleive it, he had sold seventeen that morning, it almoast made one swett.

"Wick will you have?" he said. "Percy's fifteen shillings and Darcy's a pound."

"Percy," I said.

"Have you got fifteen shillings?" he said.

"No," I said.

"Oh," he said.

But then Green said, "Yes, you have, I owe you five."

"What for?" I said.

"I've forgotten," he said, and winked at me.

"Are you going to keap me here all day?" said the shopman.

"Don't be silly," said Green, "you're here all day anyhow, so how can we be keaping you? And before we buy



"What does this rabbit-pie taste like?"



Percy we've got to know that he torks."

I thort the shopman was going to get angry, but there were two of us, so he changed his mind.

"Speak up, speak up," he said to Percy.

And Percy said, "You silly old woman."

"That won't do," I said.

"Why not?" said the shopman.

"Becorse it's going to an old woman, at least, she will be soon," I said, "and she may not like it."

"What dose Darcy say?" said Green.

So then the shopman turned to Darcy and said, "speak up, speak up."

And Darcy said, "Give us a kiss, darling."

You've got to admit that was better, but somehow it still seamed a bit funny to me, and I cuoldn't feal sure it wuold chear my aunt. But Green thort it wuold.

"After all," he said, "she hasn't got to do it."

"I grant that," I said.

"And perhaps he says something else, as well," said Green.

And the next momint Darcy did, it being, "Aren't you a sweetie?"

We both liked that—you know, for aunts—but there was still one differculity, the pound. Of corse, I knew all about Green's weaze, he didn't owe me anything, he was jest being desent,

and he even tried now to raze it so I cuold get Darcy, but I said no, you can't let another felow be saddled with your own aunts, there's a limit, well, I mean, isn't there? But in the end we agreed that he shuold lend me 7/8, I having 11/4, and he insisting he shuold give the odd shilling himself so that one-twentyeth of Darcy was from him, and the rest from me. If you get a pensil and paper and work that out, you'll find it is right.

"Yes, but what about the cage?" said the shopman.

"Oh," we said.

"Well, I'll tell you what I'll do," he said. "Come back to-morow and I'll put the bird in an old cage I've got that you can have for twelve bob, that's all I'll charge you, and you can pay me for the cage a bob a weak, how'll that do?"

He cuold see we were honest.

Well, we gave him the pound, and next day I called for the parot on my way to my aunt, it then being her birthday, after tyeing a card on to the cage that said it was from Green and me, my name being ninteen-twentyeths bigger than Green's to show how much was from wich. That was Green's idea, and he wrote the card, but to be honest I wasn't very kean on it.

My aunt opened the door to me herself, *n'avant pas des domestiques*,\*

\* French for, "Having no skivvy."  
Author.

and I've got to be truthful and say that she nearly fainted when she first saw the parot. But after she'd got over the shock she seamed pleased, and I cuold spot by a way I know that it was going to be all right. I told her how to make it tork, and she went up to it and said, "Speak up, dearie," and it replied, "You silly old bische!"

Don't get woried. It ended all right. Mind you, it was a pretty garstly momint, but I saw in a twink what had hapened, the shopman had given me Percy, after chargeing me for Darcy! But Green and I put that strait next day, the shopman pretending it had been a mistake when we said we'd emprison him, and my aunt is now so fond of Darcy you can hardly tare them apart.

Mind you, it hasn't made her chearful. I don't think anything cuold. But, well, anyway, we've saved her from going batts.

o o

#### My Pile

"Greenock enlisted most of its adult population in the praiseworthy object of collecting, individually, waste paper to the amount of their own weight."

News Item.

Financiers, a hundredfold,  
May give the realm their weight in gold;

I, but a humble pinch-and-scraper,  
Will give instead my weight in paper.



"Pencils and paper ready, everyone? Now I want you all to write a short essay on how to immobilize your car in the event of an emergency."

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